(c) There are at present 4.77 lakh Fair Price Shops in the country.

Quality checks during purchases by FCI

1878. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether quality checks are carried out before FCI purchases rice or foodgrains;

(b) if not, the reasons thereof;

(c) if so, the steps taken if the quality of the foodgrains is found to be below-standard;

(d) the action taken against persons who are found responsible;

(e) whether the view of the respective State Governments are also considered when the foodgrains are given for Public Distribution System through distributors; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. FCI procures rice or foodgrains strictly as per the quality specifications laid down by the Government of India.

(c) Whenever the quality of the foodgrains is found to be below-standard, strict disciplinary action is taken by FCI against the defaulters.

(d) The persons who are found responsible, strict action is taken depending upon their defaults ranging from censure to removal from services.

(e) and (f) Yes Sir. At the time of issue, ample opportunities are provided to the officials of the State Governments/UT Administrations to inspect the stocks prior to lifting from the FCI godowns. The Government have also issued instructions to all the State Governments/ UT Administrations that an officer not below the rank of Inspector should be deputed to check the quality of foodgrains before lifting from the FCI godowns.